

26 April 1968

MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

SUBJECT: Hearing of Special Subcommittee on International Health, Education and Labor Programs of the Senate Labor and Public Welfare Committee

REFERENCE: Memorandum for the Record, same subject, dated 25 April 1968

1. Subject hearings opened at 10:10 a.m. on April 26, 1968 in Room 4232, New Senate Office Building. Six witnesses testified:

John Nagle, President
National Federation of the Blind, Inc.
Washington

Jack Otero, Assistant Director
International Affairs Department
Bureau of Railway, Airline & Steamship
Clerks - affiliated with Railway Labor
Association
Washington

Richard Humphrey, Director
Commission on International Education
American Council on Education
Washington

Francis Pressly
Director of International Programs
National 4-H Foundation
Washington

Dr. Mansfield I. Smith
Director of Washington Operations
Experiment in International Living

James Fowler, President
US Youth Council
New York, New York

2. All six witnesses came to the hearings prepared to read previously written statements, endorsing S. 1779. The

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first three witnesses read their statements. The fourth, Mr. Pressly, was interrupted by Senator Yarborough (the only Subcommittee member present throughout the hearings) who requested that the reading of the formal statement by Mr. Pressly be terminated; this request was to facilitate adjournment of the Subcommittee meeting by 12 noon because Senator Yarborough's presence was required on the Senate floor. The prepared statements by the first four witnesses were distributed, and copies are attached. No extra copies were available of Mr. Smith's and Mr. Fowler's statements.

3. The attached statements are largely self-explanatory, but the following remarks may be of interest:

JACK OTERO

Otero opened by endorsing the April 25 testimony of Joseph Beirne. Otero, like Beirne, concentrated on Latin America, emphasizing that he (Otero) had spent 3½ years in Rio and 2½ years in Lima. Otero, who returned to the U. S. in July 1966, emphasized in particular the "outstanding work" of the International Transport Workers Federation (ITF) in its people-to-people program.

After giving historical background on the ITF, Otero stressed the Federation's work in Asia, Africa and Latin America. Otero complained that the ITF often was unable to compete with Church (i.e., Catholic) and Communist groups working in the same fields--often collectively. Otero mentioned that the ITF's annual budget is only \$200,000.

The ITF's role in helping solve a recent railway strike in Guatemala was cited with considerable pride by Otero; he was highly critical that the railway involved was owned by a U. S. company whose management had encouraged continuation of the strike in the full knowledge that the Guatemalan Government might thereby be made to fall. Otero also complained that both L. A. and U. S. business interests in Latin America often actively work to thwart trade union growth. In strongly supporting S. 1779, Otero stressed the need for "complete independence" if people-to-people programs of the ITF variety are to succeed.

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(Yarborough thanked Otero for his strong support. The Senator also noted that 1968 is an election year and that many Congressmen are busy campaigning, thus having less time to devote to legislative matters. Yarborough said he and his Subcommittee could use all of the "lobbying" of Congressmen that could be marshaled by any organization favorably disposed to S. 1779; and the Senator urged such organizations to exert all possible pressure to assure enactment of the Bill this year.)

RICHARD HUMPHREY

Humphrey's statement is largely self-explanatory but it is worth noting that Yarborough expressed these reactions to points made in Humphrey's statement:

a. The sponsors of S. 1779 do not envisage that the foundation would supplant all State Department, AID or USIA programs;

b. The sponsors' hope is to avoid bureaucratic red tape of the type connected with some government (i.e., AID) programs;

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d. Yarborough does not share Humphrey's apprehensions about the foundation getting a mix of government and private money;

e. S. 1779 envisages granting many small grants for people-to-people programs in contrast to the large grants made by the big U. S. foundations;

(Humphrey suggested that the objectives of S. 1779 could be achieved by contracting programs through a private organization; and that if none now exists, one could be created. Yarborough expressed his doubts that such a contracting arrangement would be feasible.)

WANSFIELD SMITH

The Experiment in International Living (EIL): brings 2,400 persons from 95 countries to the U. S. annually; is involved with 600 other exchange visits involving second and third countries; and altogether is concerned with 3,400 such visits annually.

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EIL (and other such organizations) has discovered that State Department funds for grants have decreased and will decrease even more during the next fiscal year.

JAMES FOWLER

After briefly tracing USYC's 20-year history and noting that USYC's international activities began only in 1962, Fowler stressed his opinion that the effectiveness of programs by private voluntary organizations often is better than "old-line programs," but that the old-line activities often find it easier to obtain funds.

In Fowler's 2½ years as president of USYC, the organization had been involved in a variety of overseas activities, including seminars and leadership programs.

USYC receives some AID funds but its applications for support from the big U. S. foundations have been turned down. Fowler noted that only two contributions had been received from a recent fund-raising drive addressed to 60 possible donors.

Passage of S. 1779 would be "a tremendous contribution" to the international youth program. The S. 1779 funds would provide, among other things, a financial continuity that now is lacking.

Fowler, noting that the language of the Bill stated that Council members "shall be eminent in the fields of education, student activities, youth activities, labor...." expressed

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the hope that, so far as youth members of the Council are concerned, they will be really qualified, experienced youth leaders rather than prestigious persons without a direct connection with youth.

(Yarborough in response asked if Fowler had in mind youths who specialized in climbing into the windows of university presidents' offices. Fowler jokingly responded that such youths, in his opinion, were better equipped to explain "Red Rudi" than would be the old timers.)

4. Fowler, like Smith, only had about 10 minutes to testify before Yarborough adjourned the hearing, to hurry to the Senate. But Yarborough tarried to engage Fowler in friendly and sympathetic conversation. The undersigned similarly tarried. First of all Yarborough asked about "Red Rudi," apparently not knowing who he was. There followed a discussion of Yarborough's (student?) experiences in Germany, a statement to Fowler that "we want to cooperate with you," and a reciprocal declaration by Fowler of UBYC's desire to facilitate the Subcommittee in any way possible. It was the undersigned's distinct impression from this post-hearing exchange, that Yarborough is well disposed toward the UBYC. It might be noted, as indicated in reference, that Yarborough did not display the same warmth toward NEA President Swartz on April 25.

5. Efforts are being made by the OLC to obtain texts of the Smith and Fowler statements.

Signed

[Redacted Signature]

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Attachments: 5
as stated, para 2

Distribution:mw

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SUBCOMMITTEE ON
INTERNATIONAL HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND LABOR PROGRAMS

Hearing

Friday, April 26, 1968

(S. 1779: To establish an international health, education, and labor program to provide open support for private, nongovernmental activities in the fields of health, education, and labor, and other welfare fields.)

Witnesses

* John Nagle, President
National Federation of the Blind, Inc.
Washington

* Jack Otero, Assistant Director
International Affairs Department
Bureau of Railway, Airline & Steamship Clerks -
affiliated with Railway Labor Executives
Association
Washington

* Richard Humphrey, Director
Commission on International Education
American Council on Education
Washington

* Francis Pressly
Director of International Programs
National 4-H Foundation
Washington

Dr. Mansfield I. Smith
Director of Washington Operations
Experiment in International Living
Washington

* Prepared Statement attached.

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Statement Presented by John F. Nagle
Chief, Washington Office
National Federation of the Blind

APR 26 1969

In Public Hearings on S. 1779
Conducted by the Special Subcommittee
on International Health, Education, and Labor Programs
Committee on Labor and Public Welfare, United States Senate

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee:

My name is John F. Nagle. I am chief of the Washington office of the National Federation of the Blind. My address is 1908 Q Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20009.

Mr. Chairman, the National Federation of the Blind is appearing here, today, to give its endorsement and support to S. 1779, a bill introduced by the able and distinguished Senator Ralph Yarborough of Texas, to establish an International Health, Education, and Labor Program to provide support for private non-governmental activities in the fields of health, education, and labor and other welfare fields.

The National Federation of the Blind is a nationwide organization with a membership primarily of blind men and women, joined together and working together, to secure, for all who are blind, a fair and equal opportunity to live worthwhile lives.

By our organized efforts and individual example, we strive to eradicate misinformation about blindness and false notions about blind people.

We reject the inferior, demeaning and sterile status of benevolent custodialism--our lot by custom and tradition--and we assert the right of all blind people to determine their own destiny, to direct their own lives, to share fully in the hazards and responsibilities, as well as the rights, privileges, and opportunities of constructive and contributory living.

We, the organized blind, do not limit our concerns or our efforts only to our members, but we seek and we work for improved conditions and equalized opportunities for all without sight in America, for all without sight in the world.

We, the organized of America, know that blind people can live independent, inter-dependent lives, for we are doing so.

We know that blind people, themselves, are best qualified to solve the problems of blindness, and we assert the right to do so, we assume the responsibility for doing so.

We assert this right, and we demand this right, individually and as members of the National Federation of the Blind.

We assume this responsibility as individuals and as members of the National Federation of the Blind.

In 1940, Mr. Chairman, a dozen blind men and women representing seven state-wide organizations of blind people, met in Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania and formed the National Federation of the Blind.

Today, with a membership of more than 40,000 sightless Americans, combined in some 300 local chapters, which, in turn, are federated in 37 state organizations, all merged at the national level in the National Federation of the Blind--

Today, Mr. Chairman, the organized blind movement in America is an irrefutable demonstration of the normality of blind people, of their capacities and capabilities, it is a conclusive demonstration of the possibilities of achievement attainable by blind men and women joined in common cause and working together toward shared objectives.

In furtherance of our desire and our determination to encourage and assist the blind of other nations to achieve fulfillment in their lives, to help them realize their potentialities as human beings, we the organized blind of the United States, were instrumental, several years ago, in the creation of the International Federation of the Blind--a worldwide organization of affiliated national organizations of blind people.

In the years prior to the founding of the International Federation of the Blind, and in the subsequent years, we, blind Americans, have gained a greater understanding of the sorry plight of the blind in other nations, of their great need for help and encouragement.

As we, blind Americans, have become ~~more~~^{more} familiar with the distressing conditions of blind people in other nations, as we have become better acquainted with blind people of the Near and the Far East, of Europe and Africa, of South and Central America, as we have become better acquainted with blind people from many countries and every area of the world, there has grown in the National Federation of the Blind an increasing desire to assist these people, an increasing determination to share our experience as blind people, our good fortune as blind Americans, with the blind of other nations, that they may gain from our experience, that they may benefit from our good fortune.

Since 1964, Mr. Chairman, when the National Federation of the Blind began expanding the scope of its international activities, we have had more than two dozen leaders of the blind from nations scattered throughout the world attend and participate in our annual national convention, and they have spent time traveling about our country--

They have become acquainted with blind people.

They have learned how we function in our "self-help" organizations.

They have learned of the diversity of our employments and our activities, the extent to which we take part in all aspects of community and national life.

Our members, serving as hosts and guides, gained much from their association with these leaders of the blind from other lands, and, of course, our guests learned much during their stay with us.

In fact, Mr. Chairman, we believe the experiences that we of the National Federation of the Blind shared with our fellow blind from other nations were of much mutual benefit.

Each blind person, who has been with us, has been a leader of the blind in his own country, and actively engaged in seeking a better life for the blind of his own country.

Each blind person who has visited us, who has come from a foreign nation to be with us in the United States, has, by associating with blind Americans, learned about blind Americans, what we are able to do and what we are doing, and because of this time with us, each person has been better able to work in his own country for improved opportunities for his fellow blind citizens.

We of the National Federation of the Blind believe, Mr. Chairman, that by affording leading blind persons of other nations a chance to visit America, results of far-reaching significance are achieved--

Surely, Mr. Chairman, the people of the world have heard far too much of the wealth and the weapons of America, but, we believe, they have heard far too little of the deep and general concern in America for persons who are physically and mentally impaired--of the special helps and services provided to such people, of the educational and training programs available to them, of the gainful employments engaged in by them--

They have heard far too little of the opportunities for normal, self-dependent living, achievable and achieved by physically and mentally disabled persons in America.

Mr. Chairman, as American citizens, we of the National Federation of the Blind believe it is most important that this aspect of our national life and culture be better known throughout the world--that the people of the world be informed that basic in our national philosophy and practice, there is the cornerstone belief of the worth of each individual; a belief so solidly rooted and so all-pervasive that it includes the blind, other physically impaired persons, and mentally impaired persons, within its scope.

Of course, blind persons who visit the United States as guests of the National Federation of the Blind are shown the schools, the libraries, and the other institutions and agencies which serve the needs of the blind in this Nation--but that isn't the reason we have them here.

We want them here to meet blind Americans.

For, as foreign blind people meet blind Americans, they discover that here in this country, as in theirs, there are adverse public attitudes toward the disabled, that there exists prejudices and discriminations, social and economic barriers, which bar the way of the impaired who seek to achieve self-dependent lives.

But Mr. Chairman, they also discover that much is being done to combat such attitudes, to eliminate such barriers.

The foreign blind who visit America discover it is the policy of our government to afford full and fair opportunity to all citizens, and they discover that "all" includes the blind, the deaf, the crippled, the mentally defective--that it includes every American, that none are excluded because of physical defect or mental disability.

Blind leaders from other lands who spend a brief time in America discover that in our democracy, all citizens are guaranteed the right and assured the opportunity to work to change that which they deem unwise, unfair, or disadvantageous to their interests and beliefs, and they may work to achieve such change by individual petition, or in concert with others, by joint and organized action.

They become familiar with the organized efforts of blind Americans to improve their lot, to meet the challenges of sightlessness in a sight-structured society.

They are able to observe and learn our methods and techniques, and they are told of our accomplishments.

But most important of all, Mr. Chairman, we believe, blind persons who come from other lands to be with us, learn of the spirit--the American spirit--which is so well exemplified by blind Americans: Our determination to live normally, to function fully and independently.

They learn of our successful efforts to help ourselves.

And they gain by association with us the realization that their fellow blind, too, may strive and achieve just as we, American blind men and women, have striven and achieved; that the blind of other lands may accomplish much by working together and trying together, as we, the blind of the United States, have worked together and tried together and accomplished much together.

Leaders of the blind from foreign nations who meet and become acquainted with American blind persons also learn of the almost limitless number of occupations, businesses, and professions in which we are gainfully, competitively, and successfully engaged, and they return to their country with a strengthened belief in the potentialities available to their fellow blind, with a new knowledge of the economic possibilities available to their fellow blind.

They return to their country with a conviction that if the blind of America can aspire and attain economic self-sufficiency, can attain social equality, so too, can the blind of their own nation.

Mr. Chairman, the National Federation of the Blind has dealt too fully, perhaps, with what we believe are the real gains which result by enabling blind men and women, leaders of blind people of other lands, to spend a bit of time here in the United States among blind Americans.

But we have done so because we have found such an extensive explanation necessary, and even then, sometimes, our objectives have not been understood.

As you well know, Mr. Chairman, there are already great numbers of publicly and privately financed programs to bring persons from foreign nations to the United States.

However, when the National Federation of the Blind has investigated these programs, usually, we have found them categorical in approach.

We have found that if we wanted to bring teachers of the blind to America to learn how to become better teachers, vocational rehabilitation counsellors to

become better vocational rehabilitation counsellors, for other technicians, other specialists in the field of the blind to come here to secure further training in their professional specialties, then funds would have been available to us.

But when we have talked of blind persons coming to the United States to learn by association with American blind persons, when we have talked about blind foreign leaders of the blind visiting the United States that they might learn how blind Americans have worked together in their "self-help" organizations to secure improved status for blind people, then, Mr. Chairman, then we have found that that which we wanted to do just didn't fit in any established category in the various international exchange programs.

There was one exception to this, however--the Educational and Cultural Exchange Program of the State Department.

The personnel of this agency with whom we have dealt have understood the international goals of the National Federation of the Blind, and they have enthusiastically cooperated with us in our efforts to secure financial support for our foreign blind applicants.

But, Mr. Chairman, only seven of our requests to this agency have been approved since 1964--for it has very meager funds, and such funds as it has are disposed of by our embassy people.

And we have usually found that travel grants for blind people to come to the United States are far down on embassy priority lists.

It is our hope, therefore, Mr. Chairman, Members of the Committee, that S. 1779 will be promptly approved by you, that it will be promptly passed by Congress.

For we believe the kind of international program that would be established by S. 1779 is the very kind that we have looked for in vain--the kind of program

that would be administered by personnel who would understand what we are trying to do, who would be responsive to what we are trying to do for the blind of other nations.

We believe the international program established by S. 1779 would offer the National Federation of the Blind the possibility of help in our determined efforts to help the blind of other lands, that they will then be better able to help themselves.